

Today's News - Tuesday, October 22, 2013

- Caldwell sent us his report from the Monterey Design Conference: "Dinners were better, breakfast was not, but the weather was stunning," and the line-up of regional, national, and international architects was (mostly) inspiring.
- Part I of a special report on NYC a year after Hurricane Sandy reveals "striking disconnects" between City Hall and the neighborhoods affected.
- Chaban reports on plans for a Park Avenue makeover around Grand Central in an effort to "put a green sheen on a controversial East Side rezoning."
- Heathcote delves deep into the history and future of what have typically been "boring buildings" where "most scientific breakthroughs have occurred," and ponders: "Should they express something of the wonder of the world they are built to examine?" (great read and great pix).
- Buxton checks in on the future of health-care design with a look at "some of the fresh and witty design thinking taking place in healthcare environments today."
- Kamin gives two thumbs-up to Gang's "stunner" of a boathouse on the Chicago River: "Here is the rare building that simultaneously shapes space and works as an object in space that befits Chicago's status as the first city of American architecture" (alas, there's also politics - but fab pix!).
- Pepchinski has a few quibbles with little details, but otherwise finds the Tchoban Foundation Museum for Architectural Drawing in Berlin "just right for its content."
- Nettler's Q&A with Birnbaum re: the state of landscape preservation and "why it's easier to love a landscape than a building": "It's no longer just 'Zaha' and 'Rem.'"
- Coren reports on Milwaukee's urban agriculture initiative to repurpose some of the city's 2,700 vacant lots and 1,300 foreclosed homes rather than mothballing them to sell in the next boom.
- Hume minces no words about why it's time to bring down Toronto's Gardiner Expressway: "How does it help to have a raised highway that separates and divides the very city it was meant to bring together?" (comments are full of anger and angst).
- Eyefuls of Anselmi Attiani Associated Architects' winning design in the Breathe: Urban Village competition that "is being held up as the new face of central city living in Christchurch."
- That's just in time for Christchurch's FESTA 2013, where "vacant sites and empty buildings will be used to encourage urban activity in the CBD, inviting the public to participate in the remaking of the city."
- Bad news/good news for Modernism: An architectural historian sees the demolition of Goldberg's Prentice Hospital as Chicago's "Penn Station moment" (great read!) + Slideshow of some Modernist buildings either at-risk or already demolished (alas, not all architects are credited).
- On a brighter note, hopes are high that Gorlin's plans for Saarinen's Bell Labs "will re-emerge as a civic center for the surrounding town."
- Lowder plays myth-buster: Brutalist campus buildings were not designed to thwart student riots: "the philosophy behind Brutalism was directly opposed to repression and control, a detail which makes the style's later association with totalitarianism all the more ironic" (great pix, too).
- Fisher revisits a 1973 P/A Award winner: Ant Farm's House of the Century "anticipated the current interest in parametric and sustainable design" - bit it was "built in the wrong century."
- Future Cities' Top 100 City Innovators are some of our faves (and the Most Overrated - Calatrava makes the cut) + Cheers to the thought leaders lined up for the 2nd annual VERGE 25 Awards.

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You Get Learning Units for This? A Weekend at the Monterey Design Conference: Dinners were better, breakfast was not, but the weather was stunning, and the AIACC did a great job recruiting regional, national, and international architects. By Kenneth Caldwell- ArchNewsNow

Special Report: Are The City's Most Storm-Vulnerable Communities Being Heard? Nearly a year after Superstorm Sandy, are City Hall and the city's neighborhoods on the same page when it comes to planning for climate change and the possibility of another catastrophic storm? A two-month investigation revealed striking disconnects... By Sarah Crean [Part 1]- Gotham Gazette (NYC)

A new look for Park Ave. could help Bloomberg Administration push for more skyscrapers in East Midtown: Medians would be widened to accommodate pedestrians and bikes. And the denuded viaduct around Grand Central would be spruced up...to put a green sheen on a controversial East Side rezoning. By Matt Chaban -- Rose Urban Solutions [images]- NY Daily News

Lovely laboratories: Most scientific breakthroughs have occurred in boring buildings. Can a new generation of architects change that? The Einstein Tower...still appears strikingly futuristic and aesthetically unsettling...Today, expensive new physics buildings are being planned all around the world. The question is, are they any different from - or better than - their shabby predecessors? By Edwin Heathcote -- Erich Mendelsohn (1922); Frank Gehry (2004); DUSA (1974); T Büchi/H Dessimoz (2002); Charles Jencks; Hawkins\Brown; Jestico + Whiles; ACXT Architects; Rudy Ricciotti [images]- Financial Times (UK)

Health check for hospitals: Just because it's a hospital, it doesn't have to be institutional-looking...some of the fresh and witty design thinking taking place in healthcare environments today, plus the crossover of ideas to healthcare from the other sectors such as the workplace and hotels. By Pamela Buxton -- IBI Nightingale; Cottrell & Vermeulen; Urban Salon; Humanscale [images]- FX Magazine / DesignCurial

Jeanne Gang's boathouse stunning: WMS Boathouse at Clark Park is an exuberant addition to Chicago River: ...a welcome shift from the stuffy, dark-paneled elitism of old boathouses...Here is the rare building that simultaneously shapes space and works as an object in space...a stunner that befits Chicago's status as the first city of American architecture. An instant landmark... By Blair Kamin -- Studio Gang Architects [slide show]- Chicago Tribune

Make No Small Plans: An architect with offices in Moscow and Berlin creates a fitting tribute for the display and study of historic architectural drawings: One can quibble with little details...Yet the intensity and quality of the Tchoban Foundation Museum for Architectural Drawing is just right for its content: an encounter with it provides the perfect inspiration to reach for a pencil and start drawing. By Mary Pepchinski -- SPEECH Tchoban & Kuznetsov; NPS Tchoban Voss [slide show]- Architectural Record

"Make Love, Not Worse": On the State of Landscape Preservation: Charles Birnbaum discusses the challenges with preserving and managing significant Modernist landscapes, lifting the veil on the field's key contributors, and why it's easier to love a landscape than a building..."It's no longer just 'Zaha' and 'Rem.'" By Jonathan Nettler -- The Cultural Landscape Foundation/TCLF; Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer; M. Paul Freidberg; Dan Kiley; Lawrence Halprin; Richard Haag; James van Sweden; Cornelia Oberlander; Laurie Olin; Mark Rios/Rios Clementi Hale Studios; Raymond Jungles; James Corner Field Operations; Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates - PLANetizen

Transforming Milwaukee's Vacant Lots Into A New Agricultural Economy: Can one of America's poorest cities pull off a resurgence through urban agriculture and local food? "We're trying to do a paradigm shift with how cities deal with their real estate"...some of the city's 2,700 vacant lots and 1,300 foreclosed homes are now being repurposed...rather than mothballed and sold during the next boom. By Michael J. Coren -- Home Gr/own Milwaukee- Fast Company

Gardiner Expressway's replacement could bring us together: Improving connections to the east side would be just one benefit of bringing down the Gardiner: ...in Toronto traffic takes precedence over green space and any "tree-lined thoroughfare"...How does it help to have a raised highway that separates and divides the very city it was meant to bring together? By Christopher Hume - Toronto Star

Italian firm designs urban village for Christchurch: Anselmi Attiani Associated Architects' design for 72 terraced houses and apartments on an almost 1 hectare block opposite Latimer Square has won top prize in the international competition Breathe: Urban Village Project. [slide show] - The Press (New Zealand)

Christchurch Festival of Transitional Architecture: FESTA 2013, a festival exploring urban regeneration for Christchurch, returns for second year...Vacant sites and empty buildings will be used to encourage urban activity in the CBD, inviting the public to participate in the remaking of the city; 25-28 October 2013- Australian Design Review

Prentice Women's Hospital Could Become Modernism's 'Penn Station Moment': Within 40 years, the building transitioned from a proud symbol of civic renewal and design innovation to the victim of old-fashioned Chicago politics. The controversy... injected the preservation movement into an urban design discussion with a presence not seen in a long time...In preservation, there are thousands of next times, many of which will be won because of awareness of what happened at Prentice. By Michael R. Allen/Preservation Research Office -- Bertrand Goldberg - Next City (formerly Next American City)

Slideshow: Modernist Architecture, At-Risk or Demolished -- Bertrand Goldberg; Paul Rudolph; Richard Neutra; Charles Colbert; James Fitzgibbon; Bruce Graham - Next City (formerly Next American City)

Eero Saarinen's Bell Labs, Reimagined: With its survival a sure thing, the vaunted building will be transformed by a team of architects led by Alexander Gorlin... will re-emerge as a civic center for the surrounding town of Holmdel. -- NK Architects; Joshua Zinder Architecture + Design; Sasaki, Walker & Associates (1962) - Architectural Record

Were Brutalist Buildings on College Campuses Really Designed to Thwart Student Riots? "Hideous, right? The administration chose that design because it was good at preventing student riots and occupations" ...that it is...myth...the philosophy behind Brutalism...was directly opposed to repression and control, a detail which makes the style's later association with totalitarianism all the more ironic. By J. Bryan Lowder -- Le Corbusier; Alison and Peter Smithson; Paul Rudolph; Mies Van Der Rohe [images]- Slate

1973 P/A Award Citation: The Ruin of the Century: The House of the Century epitomized 1960s counterculture architecture and anticipated the current interest in parametric and sustainable design...built in the wrong century. By Thomas Fisher -- Doug Michels/Chip Lord/Ant Farm; Richard Jost [images] - Architect Magazine

The Future Cities 100: Top 100 City Innovators Worldwide + Most Overrated -- Ed Gulick/High Plains Architects; Li Hu/OPEN Architecture; Léon Krier; Nikos A. Salingaros; Cameron Sinclair/Architecture for Humanity; Robert Yaro/Regional Plan Association; Candido Malta Campos Filho; Rosanne Haggerty/Community Solutions; Kaid Benfield/Natural Resources Defense Council/NRDC; Wolfgang Feist/Passivhaus-Institut; Adrian Benepe/Trust for Public Land; Jan Gehl; Fred Kent/Project for Public Spaces; Peter Murray/New London Architecture; Jason Roberts/Better Block Project; Ben Hecht/Living Cities; Bruce J. Katz/Brookings Institution; John O. Norquist/Congress for the New Urbanism/CNU- Future Cities Project (U.K.)

The 2nd annual VERGE 25 Awards celebrates executives, entrepreneurs, policy makers, thought leaders and others whose organizations and visions are building markets for such things as smarter supply chains, connected vehicles, next-generation buildings and campuses, and smart energy systems. -- Jason McLennan/International Living Future Institute; Lyndon Rive/SolarCity; Laura Storm/Sustainia; Mark "Puck" Mykleby/New America Foundation; Amory Lovins/Rocky Mountain Institute; Rick Fedrizzi/USGBC; etc. - GreenBiz.com

-- Richard Meier & Partners: Teachers Village, Newark, New Jersey
-- Toyo Ito & Associates: Friendly and socially responsible buildings that challenge the spatial conventions of modernist architecture.
-- Ripoll Tizón Estudio de Arquitectura: Social Housing in Sa Pobla, Mallorca, Spain

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